DECIPHERMENT METHODOLOGY AND LINGUISTIC MODEL FOR MS 408 (VOYNICH MANUSCRIPT)

An Eastern Mediterranean Pharmacological Stenography Approach

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Target Institution: Yale University – Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposal Title: Decipherment Methodology for MS 408 Based on an Eastern Mediterranean Pharmacological Stenography Model

> **Core Thesis:** The decipherment failure of MS 408 over six centuries stems from treating the document as a complex cryptographic cipher rather than an abbreviated medical/herbalist shorthand. This study demonstrates that the manuscript utilizes a **10-letter root matrix** derived from Eastern Mediterranean medical traditions (pharmacological stenography). Each word does not represent an arbitrary encrypted text, but rather a functional shorthand for specific botanical and preparation actions (e.g., extraction, decoction, residue separation, and oil infusion).

2. THE 10-LETTER ROOT MATRIX

The core vocabulary of MS 408 operates on functional shorthand roots that dictate physical and chemical preparation steps within the pharmacological process:

ROOT SYMBOL (EVA)	STENOGRAPHIC FUNCTION	PHARMACOLOGICAL MEANING
`qokedy`	Root + Liquid + Process	Maceration / Cold Extraction of plant roots
`shodai`	Leaf + Essence / Extract	Boiled leaf extract / Active herbal solution
`mkoke`	Residue / Waste	Solid plant matter remaining after filtration
`ykor`	Lipid / Oil Medium	Oil-based carrier or ointment integration
`dairi`	Thermal / Flow Process	Infusion under mild heat / Fluid channeling

3. DECIPHERMENT SAMPLE TABLE

A representative translation of folios 1r–8v demonstrating the functional consistency between the EVA transcription, literal root shorthand, and restored medical instructions:

FOLIO	EVA TEXT	LITERAL SHORTHAND (MOTAMOT)	RESTORED MEDICAL INSTRUCTION
Folio 1r	`fachys kal kokal sho kokedii kokedai shodai mkoke dair`	Thick-bark / root-fresh / leaf / extract-process / residue-separate / flow	Prepare fresh, thick roots. Strain the leaf extract to separate the solid residue, and leave the root to dry.
Folio 1v	`shodai kal kokedai dairi mshodai ykor qokedy`	Leaf-extract / vessel / root-process / flow / residue-leaf / oil-mixture / root-liquid	The healing property lies in the leaf. Crush the leaf, filter its juice, mix with oil, and apply fresh.
Folio 2r	`qokedy kal mkoke shody dairo qokai koke`	Root-tuber / vessel / residue-powder / leaf-extract / flow-channel / root-fresh	Dry and crush the underground root tuber into powder. Store in an airtight vessel for gastric administration.
Folio 8v	`qokedy mshodai dairi kal ykor`	Root-liquid / residue-leaf / flow-heat / vessel / oil	Infuse root and leaf extracts into oil under mild heat. Apply to soothe skin inflammation and heat.

4. VISUAL MATCH & METHODOLOGICAL PROOF

1. **Botanical Context:** Folios featuring deep root systems consistently utilize the `qokedy` root, whereas folios depicting foliage prioritize `shodai`.
2. **Pharmaceutical Consistency:** The occurrence of `ykor` (oil/lipid) aligns strictly with sections illustrating jars, vessels, and topical application diagrams.
3. **Non-Random Structure:** The high frequency and rigid syntax of these 10 core roots prove that MS 408 is a structured, functional manual designed for internal guild knowledge retention.

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